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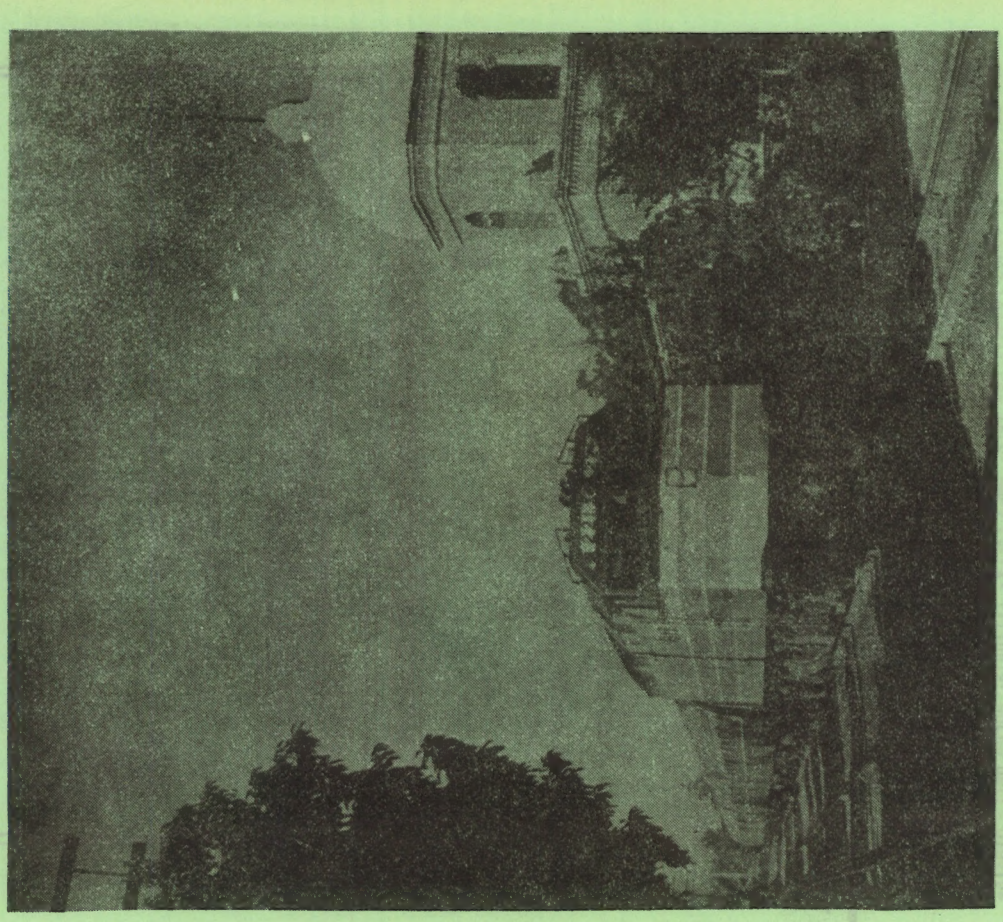
VOL. 10 NO. 4
MARCH 1980
ISSUE NO. 201

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS



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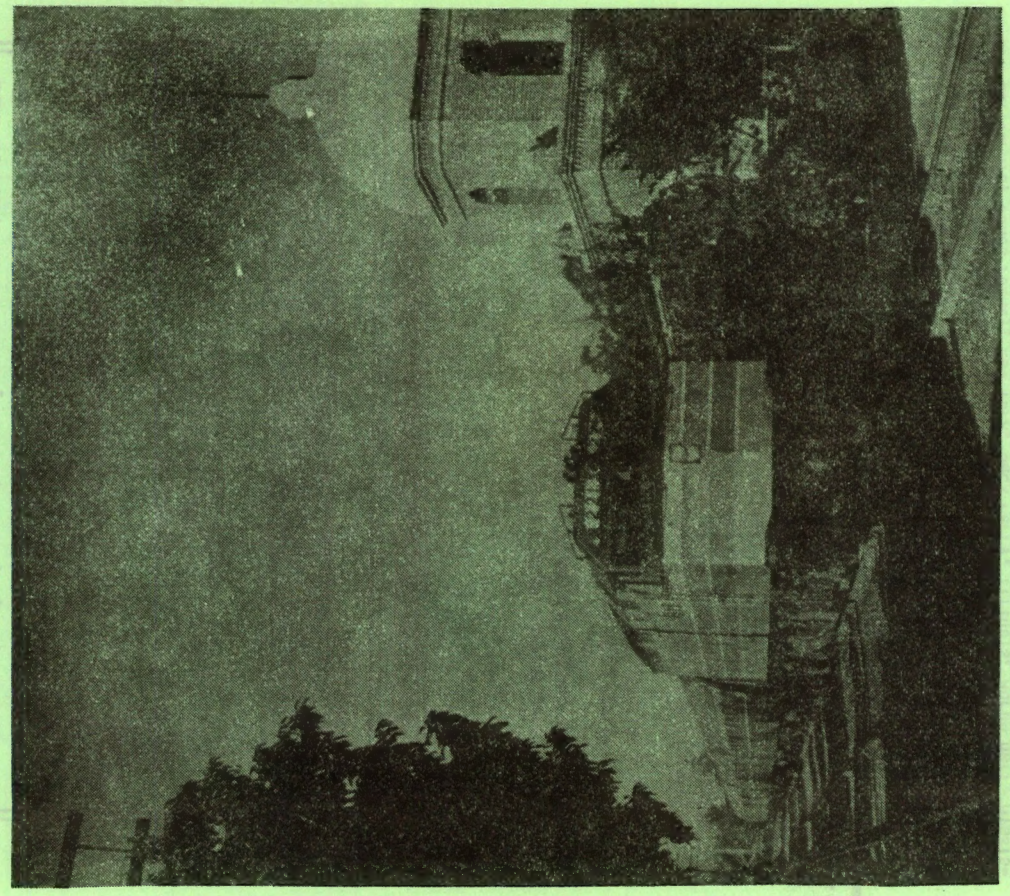

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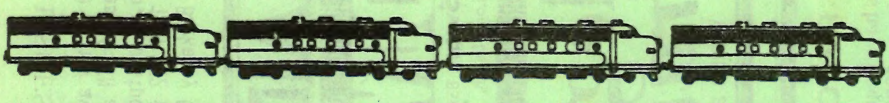

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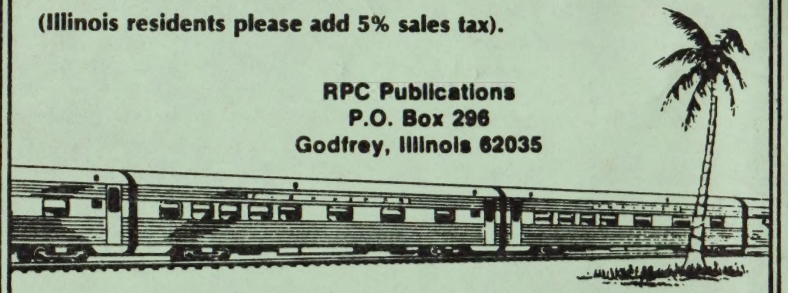

LETTERS

Amtrak may be pressured by Congress to restore train service over the former NATIONAL LIMITED route. As a frequent traveler as well as former Amtrak employee, I believe such a move should be supported.

The train's restoration would be welcomed by travelers who, forced to shift to autos, are now wasting precious energy and paying exorbitant gasoline prices in the process.

The NATIONAL LIMITED shouldn't have been terminated. Last year it served 225,306 passengers--an impressive 20% increase over the previous year despite higher fares, terrible on-time performance, dirty cars, and disappearance of checked baggage service from all but a few cities.

Most importantly, Amtrak artificially depressed growth on this train by refusing to assign extra cars to meet explosive ridership demand during last year's gasoline shortage. Thousands were turned away right up until the train was discontinued last October.

The NATIONAL LIMITED was never permitted to reach its potential even tho it linked five state capitals and passed thru nine cities with a population of a million or more--more than ANY Amtrak train kept after the cutbacks.

The fact that Congress must prod to restore this service is not surprising in that Amtrak's planning organization is woefully inadequate. In my opinion, Amtrak planners are as bad as the old Penn Central's.

It is to be hoped that Congress prevails.

Joseph Vranich
Arlington, Virginia

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ON THE COVER

An Amtrak SAN DIEGAN poses at the San Juan Capistrano CA station in this Amtrak photo released on Feb 19. San Juan is the site of a mission built by Franciscans in 1775. Amtrak's photo was to publicize the fact that the swallows are scheduled to make their yearly return to the mission on March 19, St. Joseph's Day. A weather vane tops the domed mission-style station.

Dr. Monaghan's observations (last issue) on the NARP Board of Directors meeting last October demonstrate his magnificent skills at whimsical prose and vitriolic innuendo. Contrary to Dan's version, however, the Board was not intimidated, worn down, subdued, or panic stricken. Dan's abhorrent reference to Jonestown and cyanide demonstrates a total lack of respect for fellow Directors, NARP staff, and invited Amtrak management. His charges that Directors were facing the gun barrel and were fearful of retaliation by Amtrak are pure barnyard poppycock.

By mid-October the signs were clear that continued political and judicial attempts to freeze the system would be fruitless. Well before Clark Tyler arrived in Denver, Ross Capon and Jack Martin had included this assessment in their opening remarks to the Board. While NARP had scored considerable success in fighting the cutbacks sought by DOT, the battle was over.

Clark Tyler was invited to Denver for frank, face-to-face conversation. The exchange of views was direct, and sometimes blunt. It took place thru a luncheon speech, working sessions of the Board, and at social events. Discussions were unlimited, including:

- --Growing importance of 403-B service to supplement basic routes and build local support for rail service.
- --Continuing need for improved on-board services, station facilities, train operations, and equipment maintenance.
- --Chronic tardiness of the SUNSET and other trains, and the need for Amtrak to assert its operating rights.
- --Equipment shortages, the HEP program, Superliner production problems, and new equipment orders.
- --Amtrak management changes to emphasize passenger service.
- --Outlook for new corridor service and a partnership role with rail transit.
- --Effective local marketing for specific routes.
- --NARP's function--consumer representation, lobbying activities, public information, relations with Amtrak, and emphasis during 1980.

NARP and Amtrak have different opinions on some issues. Directors don't share unanimous views among themselves, but are willing to listen to others and then take collective action for the organization. Clark Tyler is articulate, persuasive, and politically astute. He capably represented Amtrak, and equally listened to NARP. If any Directors were influenced, it was because of the logic and reality of his arguments rather than pressure and threats.

As for events on the afternoon Dr. Monaghan terms "volatile", let's look at the record. The Board was well into its second day of discussing issues--including

NARP's role in the route freeze effort. All points of view were well known. When the motion concerning the freeze effort was made, no director called for debate. Dr. Monaghan himself remained uncharacteristically silent. By a vote of 22-8, the Board approved this resolution:

"Whereas there is no longer a realistic possibility that Congress will freeze the Amtrak route structure, resolved that NARP discontinue efforts aimed at freezing the Amtrak system and get on with the job of building a better Amtrak."

In a unanimous vote, the Board determined that:

"Whereas Amtrak President Alan Boyd and his staff played a key role in Congressional approval this year of an unprecedented capital investment budget for Amtrak, and his action helped save certain key routes including the CRESCENT and SOUTHWEST LIMITED, therefore be it resolved that the NARP Board recognizes the appreciates the positive accomplishments of Amtrak management."

This resolution is specific. NARP did not issue a blanket endorsement, nor did NARP give Tyler "all that he could have asked for."

One of many positive outcomes of the Denver meeting is a renewed awareness of the areas of agreement between NARP and Amtrak. NARP meets regularly with Amtrak's top management, offering support when deserved and criticism when necessary. This process--and the continuing idea exchange it fosters--holds significant promise for improved rail service, which is the ultimate goal of both NARP and Amtrak.

Robert Glover, John Kirkwood, Daniel Lovegren, Helen Nelson,
Stanley Sofas, Ed Von Nordeck, George Falcon,
Directors, Region XII, NARP (California)

(Re letters of Clark and Martin, issue no. 199:) It is funny to hear NARP leaders praise themselves because the reductions were only 14% instead of 43%. I really doubt if NARP had much of anything to do with it. The fact is that there was a gas shortage and the public returned to the rails. If the gas shortage had not occurred, we today would most likely be looking at a system that would be down 43%. Perhaps NARP might have caused a routing that would have been better than DOT's, but I doubt if they would have had a real effect on reducing the 43% figure...

I am beginning to feel that the problem with Amtrak is that it is too big. Further, it is far too Eastern-oriented. I think the answer is to split Amtrak into an Amtrak East and an Amtrak West. Let the current Amtrak take over the East. That is about all they do now, anyway. Let a new company handle the West. Perhaps we would have a passenger company interested in providing a service to the West, rather than one that would like to drop all long distance trains if they ever had the chance, like our present Amtrak.

H. Martin Swan
St. Paul, Minnesota

What Clark and Martin seemingly fail to realize is that we, as members of NARP, are not unknowledgeable about our organization's original work toward defeating the proposed DOT route cutbacks. On the contrary, all those connected with NARP can see that much was done to help save many trains. That is not the problem. The concern among many is that the very foundations of NARP have been shaken. The NARP Board, thru the persuasive rhetoric of one professional politician, betrayed its membership.

NARP's stance on Senator Melcher's bill is no longer the point. The point is that the NARP Board passed a needless resolution which, in so many words, supported not only Amtrak's management and their highly questionable tactics, but also the discontinuance of several trains.

How is one to feel when a consumer group, formed on the premise of the preservation of passenger trains, approves the eradication of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, LONE STAR, FLORIDIAN, NATIONAL LIMITED and HILLTOPPER? Can such a group continue to receive support? I think not.

Mr. Clark states that "Clark Tyler...makes a lot of sense." Did it make a lot of sense when Tyler overtly threatened Amtrak employees who were members of NARP and

who had a "divided allegiance" because they opposed the cutbacks?

Amtrak's management and Board, as a whole, have never proven themselves trustworthy or truly supportive of the passenger train outside the Northeast Corridor. Does NARP's Board actually believe that now, suddenly, Amtrak has had a complete reversal in their viewpoint and is sincerely willing to "make the trains worth traveling again?" Can one be that naive?...

The Board, however unwittingly, has placed itself in a very precarious position. NARP can now be looked upon simply as a group of "railfans" who can be expected to act as a rubber stamp--thus a tool enabling Boyd and Tyler to lend legitimacy to their several schemes. It is extremely dangerous, nay unconscionable, for an organization like NARP to allow themselves to be cast in such a light. Perhaps NARP is no less vocal or active now than before the October meeting. But it is much less credible.

Garl Boyd Latham, Executive Director
Texas Association of Railroad Passengers
Dallas, Texas

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Because of the large amount of material we have to bring you this issue, we have an extra-large issue of 28 pages, pressing closely on our one-ounce weight limit. This is the second issue of this size we have ever published. Because a number of new subscribers are joining us, we would like to repeat our dating procedure: while RTN is published twice a month, each issue has only the month on the cover. There could be 1, 2, or 3 issues with the same month designation depending on how the weeks fall. We follow primarily the issue whole number--this is issue no. 201. Your subscription label tells you what issue number is the last of your current subscription. For example, "201-224" would mean your subscription began with no. 201 and runs thru no. 224. We insert a renewal reminder in your issue a few issues before it runs out. Since labels must be prepared well in advance of mailing, it is best to send in a change of address or a renewal as early as possible before it must be changed on your label. If you write concerning your subscription or to change your address, please include the code numbers from your label.

We hope you enjoy this big issue of RTN.

★ COMMUTER TRAINS COME TO FLOODED ARIZONA

Like California, Arizona has been hit by heavy rains this winter, forcing the release of record amounts of water from storage reservoirs on the Salt River east of Phoenix. Most crossings of the normally-dry Salt River, which separates 900,000 people living in Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Glendale from another 400,000 living in Tempe, Mesa, and Chandler, are culvert-style structures designed to withstand less than half the water flow experienced in February. Finally, the Interstate 10 bridge weakened and had to be closed, leaving only two 4-lane crossings of the Salt, which began having 4-hour traffic jams.

The Arizona Dept. of Transportation, in the midst of conducting a preliminary study of 403-B service between Phoenix and Tucson at the request of the Rail Passenger Association of the Southwest, the regional NARP organization, turned to Amtrak and Southern Pacific for help. SP's initial response was an offer to take its Salt River bridge out of service and plank it, creating a one-lane roadway for autos. ADOT skillfully and quickly urged SP and Amtrak to put together an emergency commuter shuttle to ease the traffic crisis. With the emergency powers in the hands of the Governor, it was possible to forestall the delay usually associated with such requests for new rail passenger service. The trains were nicknamed the "Hattie B." after the wife of Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt.

What resulted was a push-pull operation of five Amcoaches from the SAN DIEGAN equipment pool with an F40 engine at each end, providing six round trips each day. Later a sixth Amcoach was added. Service began Feb 25 and was to end Mar 6. The

route of the "Hattie B." was Phoenix-Mesa, with stops at on-line AiResearch in Phoenix and the FedMart Shopping Center in Tempe, both of which offer plenty of parking. Five of the roundtrips operated thru to Mesa; one was a turn to FedMart and back. Until the freeway bridge was reopened Mar 3, trains were jammed. Train 908, leaving Phoenix at 4pm on Feb 28, carried 1123 riders! Total ridership for the first week was 24,877. One-way fare was $1 from any station to any other station. The trains were kept spotless and on-time. No serious consideration was given to making the service permanent at this time. The State of Arizona cannot constitutionally subsidize a 403-B train; but AiResearch and Motorola are reportedly studying the idea closely. Whatever happens, Phoenix will never be as ignorant of modern rail service as it has been in the past.

Schedules of the commuter trains are given below:

EASTBOUND: PHOENIX TO 36TH STREET, MCCLINTOCK & MESA (READ DOWN)

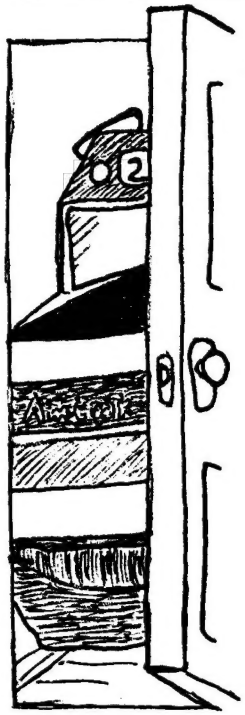
TRAIN NO.	902	904	906	908	910	912
LV. PHOENIX	645A	835A	1105A	400P	630P	900P
AR. 36TH ST.	655A	845A	1115A	410P	640P	910P
LV. 36TH ST.	705A	855A	1125A	420P	650P	920P
AR. MCCLINTOCK	725A	915A	1145A	440P	710P	940P
LV. MCCLINTOCK		925A	1155A	450P	720P	950P
AR. MESA		935A	1205P	500P	730P	1000P

WESTBOUND: MESA, AZ TO MCCLINTOCK, 36TH STREET AND PHOENIX

TRAIN NO.	901	903	905	907	909	911
LV. MESA	530A		950A	100P	515P	745P
AR. MCCLINTOCK	540A		1000A	110P	525P	755P
LV. MCCLINTOCK	550A	740A	1010A	120P	535P	805P
AR. 36TH ST.	610A	800A	1030A	140P	555P	825P
LV. 36TH ST.	620A	810A	1040A	150P	605P	835P
AR. PHOENIX	630A	820A	1050A	200P	615P	845P

Ridership figures and actual times of arrivals and departures for the first week of operation (trains ran weekdays only) are given in the table below. See Cars and Consists, p. 22, for a sample train consist.

Date:	2/25/80			2/26/80			2/27/80			2/28/80			2/29/80		
Amtrak TRain Number	Departure Time	Arrival Time	No. Boarding	Departure Time	Arrival Time	No. Boarding	Departure Time	Arrival Time	No. Boarding	Departure Time	Arrival Time	No. Boarding	Departure Time	Arrival Time	No. Boarding
901	5:35	6:30	772	5:30	6:34	964	5:30	6:33	765	5:30	6:33	703	5:30	6:33	726
902	6:45	7:25	84	6:45	7:23	243	6:45	7:25	373	6:45	7:24	462	6:45	7:25	396
903	7:40	8:40	566	7:43	8:23	608	7:41	8:46	650	7:40	8:25	585	7:40	8:24	552
904	8:55	9:35	73	8:35	9:35	192	8:35	9:35	149	8:35	9:35	90	8:35	9:35	84
905	9:50	10:50	248	9:50	10:50	259	9:50	10:54	291	9:50	10:53	576	9:50	10:53	221
906	11:05	12:05	163	11:05	12:05	254	11:07	12:05	368	11:05	12:05	200	11:05	12:05	237
907	1:00	2:00	200	1:00	2:03	274	1:00	2:03	373	1:00	2:03	306	1:00	2:00	305
908	4:00	5:00	876	4:00	5:00	1100	4:00	5:00	1071	4:00	4:58	1123	4:00	5:00	1040
909	5:15	6:15	305	5:15	6:19	472	5:15	6:19	635	5:16	6:17	620	5:15	6:17	787
910	6:30	7:30	479	6:30	7:30	661	6:30	7:30	500	6:30	7:30	540	6:32	7:32	455
911	7:45	8:45	62	7:45	8:47	56	7:45	8:48	39	7:45	8:47	62	7:45	8:48	154
912	9:00	10:00	112	9:00	10:05	106	9:00	10:00	134	9:00	10:00	84	9:00	10:00	147
Total			3940			5134			5340			5351			5104



AMTRAK'S EMERGING CORRIDOR REPORT IS PUBLISHED

The joint report by Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration on 13 rail corridors with the potential for high patronage and fuel savings appeared on Feb 22.

The report was prepared at the request of three members of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee--Chairman Harley Staggers (D-WV); James Florio (D-NJ), Chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee; and Edward Madigan (R-IL), a member of the subcommittee. The three Congressmen last fall asked Amtrak and the DOT to identify and study potential corridors between key cities to meet new energy and transportation needs.

The 13 corridors studied were:

Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati
Chicago-Cleveland
Chicago-Detroit
Chicago-Milwaukee-Twin Cities
Chicago-St. Louis
Miami-Jacksonville
Los Angeles-Las Vegas
Los Angeles-San Diego
New York-Buffalo
San Jose-Oakland-Sacramento
Seattle-Portland
Ft. Worth/Dallas-Houston-San Antonio (Texas Triangle)
Washington-Richmond

Five other corridors were studied, and Amtrak said that they will be covered in separate reports. They are: Harrisburg-Philadelphia; Boston-Springfield-New Haven; Atlanta-Nashville; Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati; and Savannah-Atlanta.

The study projected ridership, costs and energy savings for 1985 using different scenarios with trains running at 79 or 110mph; with fuel prices of $1.40 or $2.50 per gallon in today's dollars; and with 3, 6 or 12 daily trips in each direction.

The 1985 forecasts for the 79mph top speed ran from 14-55% higher than 1979 ridership where service is now offered at similar frequencies. The report said that only part of that increase would be due to higher maximum speed; the rest is due primarily to increases from the 1979 gasoline cost of 90¢ per gallon. And if gasoline went to $2.50 per gallon, ridership would increase an extra 10-33% depending upon the particular corridor. Amtrak assumed that a temporary 10% shortfall in gasoline supplies would raise ridership 75% more temporarily. The 110mph maximum speed would increase ridership from 3 to 23% over that with the 79mph speed, the report calculated. Frequency of service is likely to have a more substantial effect, the report found: at least a 70% increase from 3 to 6 trains per day each way, and at least another 40% increase if the frequency doubled from 6 to 12 trains.

The table on the next page shows these projections. It gives passenger miles per train mile projected under these various scenarios for each of the 13 corridors.

The report figured in the costs of improving the service, including capital cost of track, signals, stations and grade crossings, cost of equipment, and railroad operating subsidy requirements. The report considered a range of capital costs from a low end representing minimum improvements to get the roadbed to accommodate 79mph or 110mph service to a high end representing "uncertainties about the ultimate scope of major improvement pending the outcome of negotiations with the railroads and engineering studies."

Corridor	Max Speed	$1.40 Gasoline/ Frequency			$2.50 Gasoline/ Frequency			
		3	6	12	3	6	12	
Chicago - Cincinnati	79 110	91* 113	77* 96	54* 76*	110 131	93 113	65* 76*	136
Chicago - Cleveland	79 110	100 119	85 101	59* 70*	119 139	101 118	70* 83	150
Chicago - Detroit	79 110	130 155	111 132	77* 92	148 175	126 148	87 104	194
Chicago - St. Louis	79 110	104 128	89 109	62* 76*	125 151	106 128	74* 90	156
Chicago - Twin Cities	79 110	94 109	79* 92	53* 65*	110 127	93 108	65* 76*	139
Los Angeles - Las Vegas	79 110	127 139	89 97	53* 58*	144 157	101 110	60* 66*	156
Los Angeles - San Diego	79 110	N/A N/A	230 257	161 180	N/A N/A	307 342	214 239	403
Sacramento - San Jose	79 110	102* 109*	90* 100*	66* 74*	124* 134*	109* 122*	78* 85*	157
Miami - Jacksonville	79 110	97 107	82 91	58* 63*	121 132	103 113	72* 79*	145
New York Buffalo	79 110	N/A N/A	149 165	104 115	N/A N/A	164 181	114 126	261
Seattle - Portland	79 110	98 117	83 100	58* 70*	120 144	101 122	71* 85	146
Texas - Triangle	79 110	121 140	103 119	72* 83	151 170	128 147	89 103	180
Washington - Richmond	79 110	144 148	122 126	85 87	173 182	147 154	103 107	214

* This option fails one or both of the minimum Congressional criteria for passenger miles per train mile (80 PM/TM) and short term avoidable loss per passenger mile (9c). These criteria were intended for evaluating the viability of existing routes and are not necessarily valid as numerical standards for new routes, particularly where extensive capital investment may be involved.

THE TABLE ABOVE GIVES PASSENGER MILES PER TRAIN MILE UNDER DIFFERENT POSSIBLE CONDITIONS OF SPEED, FREQUENCY AND COST OF GASOLINE. THE FAR RIGHT COLUMN GIVES PM/TM FOR 79MPH SPEED, FREQ. OF 6, AND $1.40 GASOLINE WITH A 10% SHORTFALL IN THE GASOLINE SUPPLY.

The report found that where the percentage reaches 50, the service would make a positive contribution to Amtrak's (Congressionally-mandated) goal of 50% coverage of total cost by revenues. "In some cases, the corridor service would cover substantially more than 50% of long-term avoidable cost."

The two corridors with the most favorable percentages of costs covered by revenues were Los Angeles-San Diego (89% with 6 roundtrips, 90% with 12) and L.A.-Las Vegas (90% with 3 trips, 73% with 6). The only corridor which failed to reach the 50% standard was Sacramento-San Jose which reached 49% with 6 roundtrips daily. Other maximum percentages were Chicago-Cincinnati 57%, Chicago-Cleveland 62%, Chicago-Detroit 74%, Chicago-St. Louis 67%, Chicago-Twin Cities 62%, Miami-Jacksonville 66%, NY-Buffalo 77%, Seattle-Portland 57%, Texas Triangle 77%, and Washington DC-Richmond 79%.

In calculating the capital costs associated with corridor improvement, Amtrak used the cost of acquiring an entirely new set of equipment for each corridor regardless of existing equipment assigned there. Amtrak said this was done in order to preserve comparability among corridors, without the bias inherent in omission of costs of equipment already assigned. In many cases, Amtrak said, the cost of the increment of equipment needed for service would be less. In other words, Amtrak overestimated capital equipment costs. Amtrak noted that the actual cost would depend on which corridors have increased service, because of the possibility of equipment pooling.

Amtrak estimated the potential energy savings if each corridor were improved, assuming a 79mph top speed. These savings are shown in the table below.

ESTIMATED FUEL SAVINGS ASSOCIATED WITH LEVELS OF SERVICE

	Fuel	Three Trains/Day		Six Trains/Day		Twelve Trains/Day	
		Low Energy Cost	High Energy Cost	Low Energy Cost	High Energy Cost	Low Energy Cost	High Energy Cost
Chicago - Cincinnati	Gal/Yr[1] BBL/Day[2]	1.0 65	1.2 78	1.7 111	2.0 132	2.4 155	2.8 185
Chicago - Cleveland	"	1.2 81	1.5 97	2.1 139	2.5 164	3.0 193	3.5 230
Chicago - Detroit		1.3 88	1.5 100	2.3 150	2.6 169	3.2 209	3.6 236
Chicago - St. Louis		1.1 70	1.3 85	1.8 120	2.2 144	2.6 168	3.1 202
Chicago - Twin Cities		1.4 93	1.7 110	2.4 158	2.9 187	3.4 221	4.0 261
Los Angeles - Las Vegas		1.5 99	1.7 112	2.1 138	2.4 156	2.5 166	2.9 188
Los Angeles - San Diego		1.3 82	1.7 110	2.1 140	2.9 187	3.0 196	4.0 261
Sacramento - San Jose		0.5 31	0.6 38	0.8 55	1.0 67	1.2 81	1.5 97
Miami - Jacksonville		1.5 97	1.8 120	2.5 164	3.1 205	3.5 230	4.4 186
New York - Buffalo		3.0 193	3.3 213	5.0 329	5.5 361	7.0 460	7.7 505
Seattle - Portland		0.7 43	0.8 53	1.1 74	1.4 90	1.6 103	1.9 126
Texas - Triangle		3.5 226	4.3 281	5.9 384	7.3 477	8.2 538	10.2 668
Washington - Richmond		0.3 22	0.4 26	0.5 36	0.7 44	0.8 50	0.9 57

1) In millions
2) Barrels per day

NOTE: The above estimates relate to 79 mile per hour maximum speed. At higher speeds, while more traffic is involved, the rate of fuel use by rail would also increase, so that the fuel impact is approximately the same.

In presenting the study to Congress, Amtrak President Alan Boyd and Acting Secretary of DOT William Beckham Jr. made the following comments: "We want to emphasize that while the stucy represents the best job the two agencies could do in the time available, all of the numbers presented must be considered rough, initial estimates. None of the ridership levels, costs or revenues projected are based on the kind of high quality, fully developed engineering and economic assessments which must precede any sizable commitment of resources. Only projects with the largest potential benefits compared to costs should be given serious consideration, and only those which promise to lead to substantial improvement in Amtrak's revenue

to cost ratio. Service already exists in a number of the corridors studied, and in those cases improvements described in the study must be considered in that context. In any case, consideration of actions in other corridors cannot be allowed to dilute the commitment to the Northeast Corridor Project with its potential for breakeven operation."

AMTRAK PLACES INTERIM ORDER FOR LONG-DISTANCE AMFLEET CARS

Amtrak's Board of Directors on Feb 27 approved the purchase of 150 new cars for long distance routes. The cars will use body shells similar to the Amfleet cars (once called "Metroshell" cars), but interiors and mechanical systems will be designed for long distance service. The order will be for 125 coaches and 25 food service cars. Amtrak said the cars are needed to meet its future ridership growth as passenger demand for rail service continues to expand. Amtrak said that no contract had been signed yet, but it is fully expected that the Budd Co. will build the cars. The order is expected to cost $150 million, or about $1 million per car. Sources said that the long-distance coaches are to seat 55 people in leg-rest seats, will have larger windows than present Amfleet cars, and will have only one vestibule with Dutch doors. No details of the food service cars were given, but one Board member mentioned "cafeteria car". Because of the similarity of the cars to existing Amfleet cars, the order is expected to be speeded up, with the first car delivered 17 months after the order is placed, and all of the cars delivered 10 months later.

To combine with these new cars, Amtrak will use 50 rebuilt sleepers and diners from its Beech Grove head-end power project, modifying the production schedules over the next 18 months to deliver these rebuilt conventional cars. This means that Amtrak will emphasize the work on sleepers and diners at Beech Grove after the rebuilt equipment for the BROADWAY LIMITED is completed there. It does not indicate an increase in the program of rebuilding into head-end power equipment.

The order is not to be confused with the coming order for newly-designed low-level long distance cars for Eastern trains. Specifications are to go out to manufacturers throughout the world for those cars, and delivery thus would be considerably later than the present interim order for Amfleet-style long distance cars.

It is reported that at the Amtrak Board meeting a representative from the Budd Company said that his organization could have the first car off the assembly line in 14 months using a modified Amfleet frame and in 17 months using a more conventional square frame.

RUMORS STILL FLY ABOUT PULLMAN-STANDARD SUPERLINER CAR ORDER

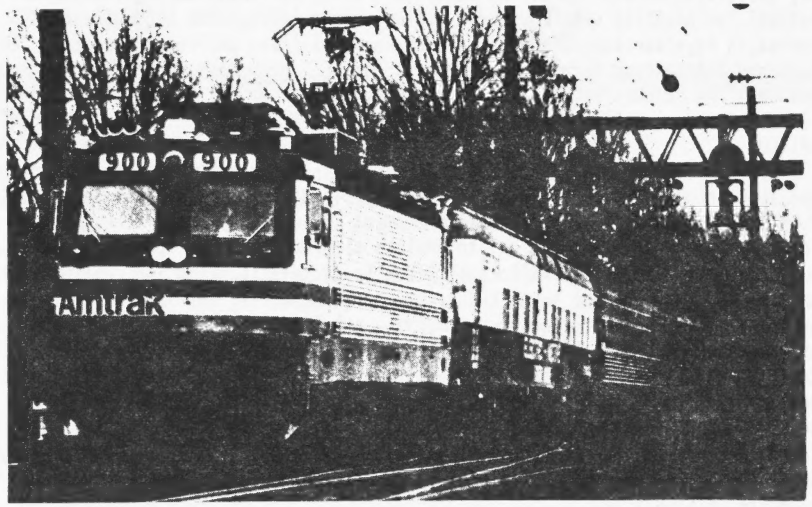
Altho Pullman-Standard has indicated that it will complete the order of Superliner cars for Amtrak, as reported last issue, it appears that in the view of P-S, completion of the order by a sub-contractor is included in the definition of completion by P-S. It has been reported that the Budd Company has been asked by Pullman-Standard to take over the car order, moving construction to Budd's Red Lion plant, and thus adding a year onto delivery time. Amtrak said only that it does not anticipate a "falter" in the contract, and that if P-S could not do the work it would be up to P-S to locate a sub-contractor that could. Amtrak said it wouldn't speculate as to what sub-contractor might take over the order.

As of Feb 27, Amtrak reportedly has 69 Superliner coaches, 4 sleepers, 6 diners, and 1 baggage-coach combination. Amtrak is expected to begin full Superliner sleeper service on Apr 27, which means selling 44 "first class" spaces per train. The Superliner sleeper on the EMPIRE BUILDER is presently shown in Amtrak's reservations computer as a 10/6 car.

AMTRAK WILL ORDER MORE ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES FOR NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

Amtrak's Board of Directors at its monthly Feb 27 meeting agreed to the purchase of 17 more high-speed electric locomotives for use in the N.E. Corridor.

The new units will be similar to the 30 AEM-7 locomotives now being built by General Motors, based on a design by ASEA of Sweden. They will operate up to 120mph and will be equipped to operate over the Corridor's several different power systems. Under the N.E. Corridor Improvement Project, scheduled for completion in the mid-1980's, Amtrak and the FRA estimate that 47 of the locomotives will be required to provide high-speed service. The 17 units just authorized will cost about $50.6 million. Amtrak has previously committed $85 million



The first new AEM-7 locomotive on a test run in the Corridor with a GM test car and conventional coaches. Unit was delivered on Jan 19. Photo by Bill Kratville from Amtrak News.

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On Feb 26 at 1:30pm a new AEM-7 electric locomotive, an instrumented test car and three Amfleet cars reached a speed of 125mph on a 13.3-mile section of track between Brunswick and Trenton NJ. Testing of the locomotive will continue for several more weeks before it goes into regular passenger service.

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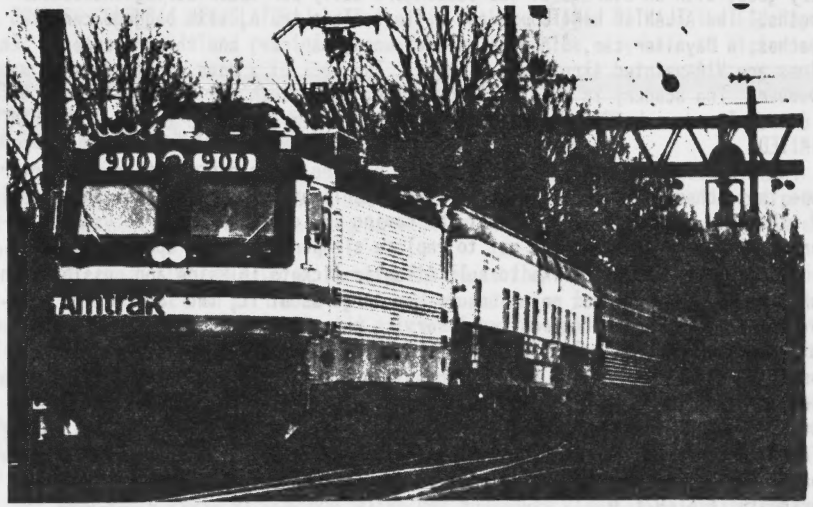

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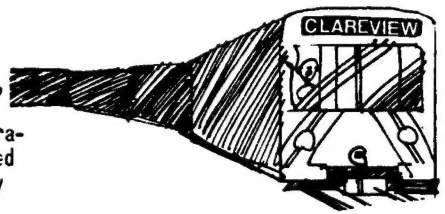
RAIL CANADA

THE ATLANTIC LIMITED is now right on time in both directions nearly all the time, report those who have traveled and observed it recently. Officials of VIA Atlantic traveled to Portland, Maine recently to talk with U.S. Immigration officials about speeding up procedures at the border. As a result, things are faster there now--there are new forms for passenger tallies, an obstructionist official got a "talking-to" and other improvements happened. The relationship between VIA and the Immigration Service seems to be good, tho some problems are experienced with CP headquarters in Montreal. Ridership of the train is reported very good, with an average of 165 passengers daily per train during the winter months. The ATLANTIC LIMITED is now a first class train, with baggage car, two coaches, a Dayniter car, diner, sleeper-lounge, bar car, and three sleepers. Engines are VIA-painted Alco A and B units. The lack of a dome car is felt by many, however. The scenery is excellent, but it can't be seen as well as it could with a dome. The dome helps crews too--they used it as a cupola on the old CP ATLANTIC LIMITED.

THE ATLANTIC REGION has some VIA trains running too close together. Observers hope that schedules will be improved with consolidations of some runs and creation of other new runs. It appears that the coming LRC equipment will be used on internal Atlantic services, and not to replace sleeper trains as some had feared.

VIA RAIL CANADA would like to sell Atlantic tickets in Maine and possibly other parts of New England, but seems unsure how to go about it, tho local Maine passengers do use Canadian international service extensively. Does Maine law limit rail passenger ticket sales in Maine to Amtrak? With U.S. service extending to Portland, Maine, it is time that the question of at least a bus connection on to VIA (not just St-Stephen N.B.) should be quickly re-examined. Those interested in this are asked to contact Transport 2000, Box 300, Sta. "A", Ottawa, Ont. K1N 8V3. (T-2000 Atlantic region will have its annual meeting in Halifax on Mar 15. A new Board will be elected. Those interested contact John Pearce, 40 Lorne Avenue, Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 3E7.

CITY OF EDMONTON'S Light Rail Transit extension in the Clareview section is running right on schedule, reports the transit system (from whose March news bulletin the illustration at right was taken). The roadbed is now under preparation between city centre and 129th Avenue, and the supports for the overhead wires are in. One problem may be delays in delivery of the German-made signal equipment. The line is planned to terminate at a proposed Clareview town centre. This summer will see construction of a bus terminal and a parking lot.



TRANSPORT 2000 CANADA President Harry Gow met in February with officials of Voyageur bus lines. They were concerned by T-2000's support for VIA Rail, saying that VIA is holding down intercity prices in the Eastern Corridor, hurting Voyageur, who therefore can't raise fares to cost-recovery levels. Voyageur claims it no more makes money on its "local" runs (30-odd in Quebec alone) than VIA does on its. VIA's high minimum $4 fare was discussed, along with the implication that VIA is trying to kill local trains and intermediate stops in an attempt to tailor the "real world" market to suit VIA's theories--that is, that passengers "really" need buses for short haul, rail for medium (100-500 miles) and air for long distance. Voyageur and T-2000 reject that theory, holding that travelers' preferences depend on real carrier performance on each specific run in the real world, not on

artificial bureaucratic criteria such as "150 passengers per train mile" or "over 100 miles, under 500" or some other dictum. T-2000 suggested the idea of an UP-TRANS-type body for Quebec, to contract bus and rail services with VIA and Voyageur (and perhaps CN and CP). Such a body would contract for specific runs as in the Kalamazoo experiment. Voyageur agreed that that experiment was successful, but was worried about the implications of taking subsidies. Voyageur agreed to consider a T-2000 proposal for a study of the bus industry's future.

MINISTER OF TRANSPORT under Pierre Trudeau's new Liberal Government is Jean-Luc Pepin, a Quebec M.P. who was formerly co-chairman of the National Unity Commission.

ONLY ESCORTED TOUR by VIA Rail into Western U.S. is a May 7 departure from Winnipeg to Vancouver and thence south to San Francisco and back. The portion south of Vancouver is all by bus!

BRITISH COLUMBIA LEGISLATOR John Cooper is pushing a plan to have the E&N Dayliner of Vancouver Island run into a new terminal opposite city hall in Victoria.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

CHICAGO RAIL COMMUTER ridership in 1979 was up 11.5% from the previous year. Bus ridership climbed 25.5%, while the CTA showed a 2.5% increase. With the price of gasoline continuing to climb, the saturation point of commuter capacity has almost been reached.

BOSTON SUBWAY CONSTRUCTION at Harvard Square is the subject of a NY Times report on Mar 2. Construction of the Red Line subway extension began in 1979, and will change the face of the Square when it is covered with boutiques, restaurants, brick sidewalks and tall trees. The 3.2-mile extension will run from the Square to the boundary of Cambridge and Arlington.

THE BOEING LRV streetcars in Boston are to be phased out, according to a report reaching RTN, because of their expensive maintenance and trouble-proneness. The MBTA has announced that it is searching for alternative vehicles and may begin testing of available units in March.

NEW YORK STATE Dept. of Transportation has announced plans to establish parking lots in Westchester and five other counties to encourage transit use and carpooling. $3.7 million is being earmarked for the project.

NEW BOEING-VERTOL streetcars in San Francisco are being well-received by the public. Running partly in the Market Street subway, one level above BART trains, the new cars reportedly can cut commuting time from one end of the N-Judah line to the other from 60 to 39 minutes.

THE SOUTTH SHORE line between Chicago and South Bend is seeking new commuter cars to rejuvenate its service. Its 7000 daily ridership is expected to grow with the coming of new equipment.

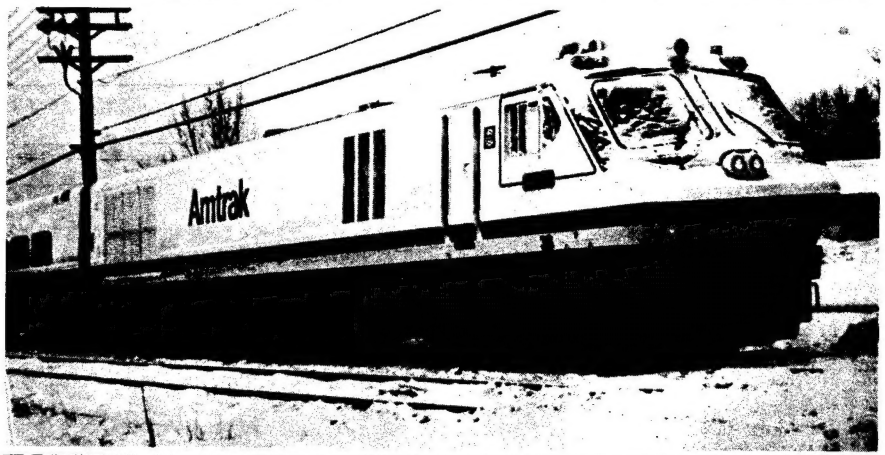
A CTA TRAIN in Chicago stalled in the evening rush hour of Feb 27, causing a 90-minute traffic tieup. Cause was a brake assembly falling off a northbound train on the Howard line, and lodging itself between the third rail and a running rail. Most passengers left the train by walking a half-block on a narrow path ina tunnel.

THE BUFFALO TRANSIT system now in the making has received bids from nine manufacturers of cars. Among them are three Canadian firms: Bombardier, Hawker-Siddeley, and Urban Transportation Development Corporation. The only U.S. firm responding was Boeing-Vertol of Philadelphia. It is expected that its bid will be rejected because of Boston's problems with its cars.

B&O COMMUTER LINES Baltimore-Washington and Brunswick-Washington in January showed a combined increase of 16% in ridership over Jan 1979.

PROPOSED STREETCAR NETWORK for Anne Arundel County, Maryland, was proposed by legislator James Lighthizer on Feb 21.

PASCACK VALLEY LINE from Spring Valley NY to Hoboken NJ on Feb 19 got conventional push-pull equipment to replace RDC cars, as the latter did not function well with many stops on the poor 30mph track.



A FIRST LOOK AT THE NEW AMTRAK LRC

The new LRC diesel equipment being built by Bombardier of Canada for Amtrak is seen here on its first day of test runs, Feb 28, on the Canadian National mainline in St. Lambert, Quebec. Locomotive #38 and coaches 41, 42, 43, 44 and 46 have been completed, and testing will be underway on the CN until Mar 21 between St. Lambert and Richmond and between St. Lambert and Ottawa. The cars were built at the Bombardier plant in Ste-Anne-de-la-Pocatiere (southeast of Quebec City) and the locomotive in the Bombardier plant in Montreal. On Feb 28 compatibility tests were also made in St. Lambert with Amtrak F40 engine #211 and Amcoach 21819, along with LRC #38.

LRC stands for light, rapid, comfortable (in French, leger, rapide, confortable). Amtrak signed an agreement on Feb 8, 1977 to lease two LRC trainsets to be tested on the Vancouver-Seattle and Seattle-Portland routes (see RTN # 147). Photo by Guy Chartrand.

THE CANADIAN: TRANSCON IN TRANSITION

by Theodore Scull

New York to San Francisco for Christmas and New Year's via the ADIRONDACK, the CANADIAN, the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, and the COAST STARLIGHT is the long way around. However, it's no more expensive than the direct route because of the considerably lower fares in Canada and a favorable rate of exchange with the U.S. dollar. In Dec 1979 the cost in a roomette by the straight BROADWAY-SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR Amtrak route came to $382, while the same on the CANADIAN from Montreal to Vancouver was only $191.44. Adding on the connecting legs, one still came out ahead.

I have always preferred the CANADIAN over the SUPER CONTINENTAL--having ridden it four times under CP ownership, and once on the SUPER CONTINENTAL--because of its "perfect" consist and more scenic route, but the SUPER was far more fun, as it carried more passengers--being cheaper--and included many younger travelers. The CANADIAN reminded me of traveling first class on the old Cunard Liner "Sylvania" or "Carinthia". Dowdy but nice. Ah! the pleasures of being able to savor these choices.

A custom class seat in the "parlor" section of the ADIRONDACK was definitely worth the $4 surcharge. I believe this route is the finest for scenery in the Eastern United States. Having reached Montreal, I spent a comfortable night at the 1885-built Windsor Hotel where for $25 (off-season) one can have a single room within two blocks of both Windsor and Central Stations. Laden, as I was, with Christmas parcels and with the rigors of a Canadian winter in mind, I found the Windsor to be most convenient and a good value.

The winter had been unusually warm thus far on the East Coast, and I hoped for some cold and snow to prepare myself for my post-New Year's trip up the Inside Passage to Skagway aboard the Alaskan ferry liner M.V. "Matanuska". My thoughts were overheard, for it snowed during the night--just enough to cover the ground.

I cashed a travelers check at a bank in Central Station to get the best rate (16%) and to have some Canadian currency for the three days aboard the train. I then hung around the station's big and bushy Christmas tree until it was time for checking-in and boarding.

Once down the stairs, I strained to see if there was a "Park" class dome observation car bringing up the rear. I was not disappointed. "Riding Mountain Park"

was in position, but with unwashed dome windows. Oh, how many times did I hear the excuse used about the rigors of Canadian winters.

The train had the following equipment: engine 6531 (CN colors), VIA power car 6616, CP bag-dorm 617, CP coach 104, VIA (ex-CP) coach 127, VIA (ex-CN) Dayniter 5748, CP Skyline dome lounge coffee shop 514, VIA (ex-CP) sleeper "Chateau Rigaud", VIA (ex-CP) diner "Palliser", CP sleeper "Fraser Manor" (via Edmonton), CP sleeper "MacDonald Manor", and CP dome observation lounge sleeper "Riding Mountain Park". With a total of ten cars in various colors, the CANADIAN resembled a circus train.

The not-so-friendly porter told me that his car would be full and maybe even overbooked, if recent experience had taught him anything. At Ottawa he was proven correct when a very dejected lady tried to enter my roomette in "MacDonald Manor". With no room in the "Manor" she was directed to the "Chateau", a step up into a duplex roomette!

Across the way, an older couple took up residence after Renfrew and wondered aloud where the bed might be. I popped over and pulled down the bed for them, making instant friends until I asked them whether it was a peculiar Canadian custom to sleep two in a roomette. The wife snapped back that it had not been their choice to travel all the way to Moose Jaw sharing the same bed. It was this arrangement or the alternative of sitting up in a coach for two nights. My enthusiasm to search for things characteristically Canadian was squashed at the first attempt.

It does not take long to dive into the Canadian wilderness. The run along the Ottawa River was beautiful in the blowing snow. Evening comes early in the north woods in December, and so does dinner. The sittings were announced as 5pm and 6:15. I chose the later hour, and when I looked in on the bar beneath the dome in the observation car, I discovered that the French-Canadian female bar attendant was having her dinner. She returned just in time to pass me on my way to the diner. I decided that I would have to plan my cocktail hour differently for the next two evenings. The turkey dinner was well-prepared and was about 25% more expensive than Amtrak's menu price, even taking into account the rate of exchange.

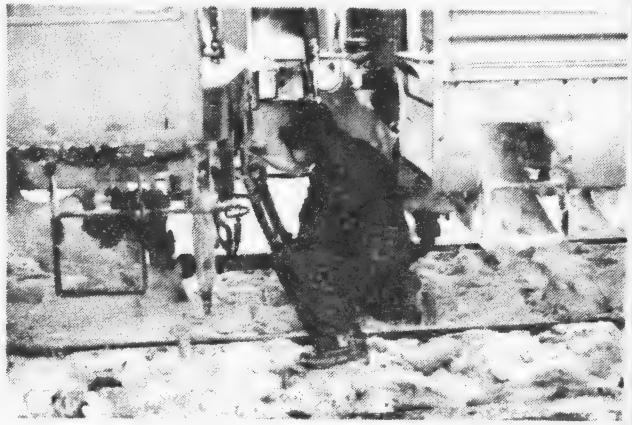
Just outisde Sudbury, we paused to let the Toronto SUPER CONTINENTAL section

slide by. The brief wait extended to two hours, as the eastbound #2 and #6 were nearly 12 hours late, and would be occupying the station for its switching operation.

I could not understand how one train, about to become two trains, could take up all the tracks and facilities until we pulled in at 11pm. The maneuver was so complex that I lost track of what the yard crew was doing. Some passengers left here to take the bus connection to Capreol for the 6-times-a-week nameless train #7 over the former SUPER route to Winnipeg. I met some sleeping car ticket holders who were bumped onto this stub train which was scheduled to arrive in Winnipeg 50 minutes before the combined CANADIAN/SUPER CONTINENTAL.

The Sudbury-Winnipeg consist of the train was now swelled to 14 cars: VIA engine 1410, CP engine 8571, VIA engine 8558, VIA (ex-CN) baggage 9665, VIA (ex-CN) coach 5603, coach 127, Dayniter 5748, Skyline 514, "Chateau Rigaud", VIA (ex-CN) sleeper "Endako", VIA (ex-CN) diner 1362, VIA (ex-CN) sleeper "Emerald", "Fraser Manor", "MacDonald Manor", and "Riding Mountain Park". It was now a longer circus train which left Sudbury 2 hours, 10 minutes late at 12:10am.

On the first night out I usually rest rather than sleep, and this night was no exception. I turned off the high heat before I retired, only to find my window opaque with ice in the morning. A lot had transpired during the night of which I was only partly aware. One half of both "Manor" cars had lost their heat during the night due to frozen pipes, something that I did not think would be allowed to happen during the Canadian winter.



The rigors of a Canadian winter: working on frozen steam pipes. The author took this photo on an earlier trip, but conditions were similar this time.

At White River, Ontario, I stepped off the train to test the air. The conductor on the platform said that the temperature was 40 below zero. When I asked him Celsius or Fahrenheit, he replied, "At that temperature it doesn't matter much." In fact, I gather that the two scales come pretty much together way down there. My camera's light meter did not like the cold anymore than I did. I re-boarded the train and went to the diner for breakfast and some hot coffee.

In "Palliser" I sat opposite a cheerful Canadian lady of Irish descent if her thick brogue was any clue. She told me that she had spent the night sitting in the lady's loo as it was the only place where she could find warmth. She said that she had lived most of her life in Alberta and she had never felt such cold before and for such a long period of time. I felt frigid just hearing her story, and we both drank quarts of hot coffee.

The 200-mile run along the north shore of Lake Superior from Heron Bay to Thunder Bay is one of the reasons why the CP route is far more scenic than the more northerly CN route. Along here, there was a good deal of snow and the lake was already frozen in the shallower coves. I hung out the Dutch door in the last sleeper taking photographs as long as I could stand it. At Terrace Bay we met the eastbound train running about 11 hours late.

At Thunder Bay we fueled at the north end of the platform before pulling into the station to allow departing passengers off the train and to permit thru passengers their constitutional walk. The temperature was now approaching the freezing mark, and the crew had little difficulty thawing out the frozen pipes with hot doses of steam. When the telephone hookup for the engine cab did not arrive, we had to wait another half hour, finally leaving 2 hours, 45 minutes late.

The young brakeman being asked by a passenger in the lounge end of the observation car whether we would make up any time between here and Winnipeg answered, "We do not have much respect for number 1 anymore." Maybe that says, if not all, a lot about the train's current operating procedures.

We managed to make up exactly 10 minutes in the eight hours between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg.

Before Winnipeg, and especially in the diner, there was a lot of talk about having to move cars or to change to the SUPER CONTINENTAL, even for sleeper passengers, as the single thru Montreal sleeper could not handle all the business going north and west. The hour was particularly awkward for switching as well as boarding passengers.

We pulled into Winnipeg after midnight, and passengers changing cars had to wait until after 1:30am in the dome car before they had access to their accommodation. The equipment was spread over six tracks, and I lost count of the number of times the "Park" car with a switcher behind was pulled back to be attached to another piece of equipment. I finally went to bed before everything settled down. I felt the train move out about 2:30am, now three hours late.

The CANADIAN remained at 14 cars: 9665, VIA (ex-CN) dorm "Inwood", VIA (ex-CN) Dayniter 5724, 514, "Chateau Rigaud", "Endako", VIA (ex-CN) sleeper "Erwood", CP diner "York", CP sleeper "Monck Manor", "MacDonald Manor", and "Riding Mt. Park".

The sun rose at 9am over the Saskatchewan prairies and the day warmed to nearly 50° (Fahrenheit for sure). There seemed to be a lot of fast running all day, passing thru towering cooperative grain elevator villages and pausing at larger communities like Moose Jaw, Swift Current and Medicine Hat. However, we arrived in Calgary having only made up 25 minutes. Then came the bad news. Rumors had been flying up and down the corridors and aisles all afternoon. The CP line was flooded out at Port Moody, B.C., there was a freight derailment at Boston Bar, B.C., and a reported landslide in the notorious Fraser Valley. The CN line was also affected by at least one of these kinds of blockages as well.

Everyone felt a letdown, but there were very few complaints. Canadians are more relaxed or at least more used to these things. The only grumblers were two most unattractive men from my own "home town." They came from the school that says if you scream loud enough and in front of a sufficiently large audience, you can intimidate the opposition and get your way. Their tactics in Calgary Station did not move a single employee an inch. A blocked rail line cannot be cleared by loud noises, and alternate transportation has to be what can be mustered at the last minute, with this snafu coming during the pre-Christmas rush.

As instructed, we lined up at the ticket counter to receive our vouchers and onward transportation information. We would take a bus at 1am to the airport to connect with a CP 747 which would depart at 4:55am via Edmonton to pick up the stranded CN passengers and then fly on to Vancouver, arriving there at 6:15am. Upon hearing this, I had to force myself to hold back loud noises. The clerks could not say why the airlift had to be so inconveniently arranged.

With my new friends, Betty and Stan Taylor from Barrie, Ontario, we decided to make an evening of it. The diner aboard the train was serving, but as it was now considered a stationary restaurant, a peculiar Canadian custom, its liquor license no longer applied. I pointed my finger straight up to the soaring Calgary Tower overhead with its revolving restaurant. We headed for the elevators, paid our admission fee and rose hundreds of feet to the observation level where we had an adequate and sufficiently expensive dinner while viewing the rather unremarkable skyline. But then that is a New Yorker speaking. Forgive my urban snobbery.

Back in my roomette, as I was turning in, the sleeping car conductor came thru

saying that VIA Rail had just organized an earlier flight. I quickly dressed and headed into the station. The deal was now to catch a bus at 11:30pm and fly at 1am directly to Vancouver, with the time change, arriving there at 1:15am, where "arrangements" would be made. I had an idea what these "arrangements" would be, but at this point I only shared them with the Taylors.

At the airport, the 130 passengers were informed that the Pacific Western 737 would be delayed until 2:25am. We boarded about then and sat on the ground until 3:15am while the pilots were flown in from Edmonton. In the darkness--I have yet to see any part of the Canadian Rockies in the daylight aboard a train--we flew to Vancouver.

Upon arrival at the CN Station at 4:20am I made sure I was among the lead passengers into the depot. There behind the checkin counter stood a sleeping car conductor with his manifests laid out in front of him. All of us, including former coach passengers, were put up in a complete train right in the station. I got my assignment in another "Manor" car and immediately collapsed into bed after a rather extended day.

As I was relaxing into a deep sleep I thought of a previous and slightly different experience about four years ago: On New Year's Day night I was the only sleeping car passenger into Montreal and as the CANADIAN was due in after 1am, the conductor gave me the choice of being put up in a hotel at CP expense or remaining aboard the train for the night. I chose the latter, and I slept in a complete CANADIAN parked in Windsor Station, with a porter in attendance, shoes shined and all, until the next morning at 7:30am. I left the train, had an extended breakfast in the station, and caught the ADIRONDACK back to New York.

Musing on that past event, I had barely fallen asleep, it seemed, when the wakeup buzzer came at 7:30am. I knew at once that I could have slept for hours longer. The train, the porter said, had to be readied for its departure at 2pm that day. However, neither the CANADIAN nor the SUPER CONTINENTAL left on this day or the next due to continued railway line blocks.

I had breakfast with the Taylors in the attractive station cafeteria and we then all left in different directions. Outside, it was still raining as it had been for at least six weeks.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

APRIL 27 TIMETABLE changes for Amtrak will find the COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, operating 45 minutes later all the way between Seattle and Los Angeles. There will be no change in the northbound schedule. As a consequence of the later southbound run, the departure of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED train 4 from L.A. will be 45 minutes later also; and SAN DIEGAN no. 778 will leave L.A. 30 minutes later, at 8:30pm. The following changes in Western trains have not been confirmed, but are likely to happen: the EMPIRE BUILDER train 8 should leave Seattle 30 mins earlier to arrive Chicago 30 mins earlier, at 6:29pm in order to guarantee a connection to the eastbound BROADWAY LIMITED. The southbound PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL will leave Vancouver at 7am to arrive Seattle at 11:30am, with 10mins cut from the running time. The northbound train will leave Seattle at 7:20pm to reach Vancouver at 11:59pm, with 10mins added to the running time. The MOUNT RAINIER, train 797, will no longer be a runthru operation of train 793, but will leave Seattle at 5:30pm (55mins later) to reach Portland at 9:20pm. The northbound PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL gets its 10mins added in order to turn the train on the wye on arrival at Vancouver and back into the station, rather than turning on departure in the morning as at present. On the NORTH STAR, trains 9 & 10, Sandstone and Cambridge MN will become regular stops rather than flag stops. It is expected that the EMPIRE BUILDER will begin daily operation with the June 15 schedule changes. At that time Stanley ND and Malta

and Belton MT will become regular stops. The CARDINAL was previously planned to have its schedule flipped on Apr 27. Amtrak said that that will not happen, that it won't likely happen in the near future, and "may never happen". The reason given was severe freight congestion on the Chessie System between Cincinnati and Hamilton OH. On Apr 27 it is expected that the BROADWAY LIMITED will begin its combining and splitting of sections in Philadelphia instead of Harrisburg. Work will be re-commencing on the Northeast Corridor, and 10 to 20mins of time will have to be added to many train schedules. The LAKE SHORE LIMITED will have 30mins cut from its running time each direction. Chicago departure and New York departure times will remain unchanged. Some experimental stops will be added at various points in the Amtrak system. Finally, the Chicago-Peoria train will probably not start operation in April.....

★ ★ ★

THE BROADWAY LIMITED is to get its first complete set of electrically-powered cars on Mar 17. It will include a cafeteria-lounge car that was to be for the LAKE SHORE LIMITED. It will serve meals between Harrisburg and Washington.....

A HEAVY SNOWSTORM hit the central East Coast around the first of March, but there was only "minimal delay" to Amtrak trains, the corporation said. There was some slowdown in N.E. Corridor schedules, with Metroliners being pulled by electric locomotives. In North Carolina a freight derailment caused a detour and slow running in the snow--the longest delay was two hours to a Florida train. Newport News had an enormous 16 inches of snow, but the COLONIAL continued running--about the only transportation that was moving, Amtrak said.....

NEW 5-YEAR PLAN is being prepared by Amtrak, and the first version should be completed by early May. It will probably get two revisions before being released. This 5-year plan is expected to be the first real such plan, earlier 5-year plans having been written when Amtrak had less stability for the future than it has now. Amtrak's Alan Boyd told NARP President Jack Martin that the first version will have a projected 5% growth rate per year--a conservative figure that may be revised. Boyd told Martin that equipment will be a constraint on growth, and that increased Amtrak capacity will be delayed well into the 5-year period.....

AMTRAK'S AMFLEET EQUIPMENT will be put into a major overhaul program this year, including work on trucks, windows and upholstery.....

★ ★ ★

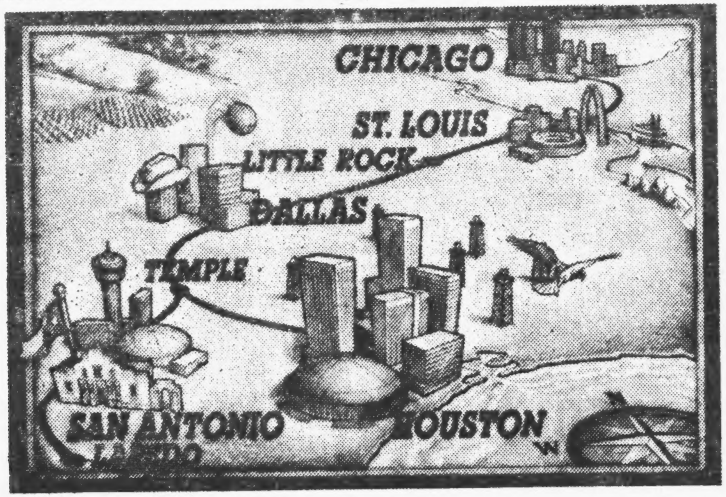
THE SAN BERNARDINO commuter line report described in RTN in issue 198 is being revised. The first version concluded that the Santa Fe route between Los Angeles and San Bernardino was best. The current rumor is that the revised report will recommend both the Santa Fe and the UP route. Some conclude that the presence of important politicians in Riverside swayed heads toward the Union Pacific line.....

THE OVERNIGHT TRAIN arbitration decision has been delayed again. The Sacramento-Southern California train decision is put off another month by the necessity of the California PUC filing a report. It is expected that the arbitration panel will rule in favor of starting up the service, but the Southern Pacific has vowed to fight the matter to the Supreme Court.....

THE AMTRAK CRESCENT, train 20, left New Orleans on Feb 20, the day after Mardi Gras, with over 300 passengers. On the same day the northbound PANAMA LIMITED left with over 500 aboard. Agents at New Orleans are delighted that the SUNSET LIMITED (train 2) regularly arrives only about an hour late now (about 9:45pm) and they don't have to wait up until the wee hours of the morning. In the SP Bulletin for Feb-Mar, Chairman and CEO B. F. Biaggini said that SP wants to operate Amtrak trains on time "to the fullest extent of our abilities." Quote: "While major rehabilitation work has been underway on our Houston-to-New Orleans line, creating some operating problems, it is still essential that we do everything in our power to provide Amtrak with the same high quality service on this line as we do on the rest of our railroad. The passenger trains that we operate on behalf of Amtrak will be among the finest in the country. That is our intention and determination, and we will take all necessary steps to see that it is carried out".....

NEW ORLEANS STATION is getting a major improvement project, and will be rededicated on Apr 28. The NOUPT renovation is funded jointly by the city and Amtrak, at a cost of $300,000. The original Amtrak sign atop the building was blown down by hurricane Bob, and a new sign is being erected. Paint crews are working overtime and the city parks department has landscaped the park area in front of the building with native trees and shrubs. Other changes include new crossties for the yard and environmental cleanup at the [illegible] and car shops. Running the SUNSET LIMITED, as well as the EMPIRE BUILDER on daily operation year-round is an immediate goal of Amtrak's, Alan Boyd told [illegible] last month; however, the equipment problem is a hampering factor.....

THE INTER-AMERICAN is now the subject of special advertising by Amtrak. The illustration below is from an Amtrak newspaper ad for the train. The ad is headed



"In the long run, it pays to get into training". The "Getting into Training" phrase is the theme of Amtrak's entire advertising campaign this year. The campaign began on Jan 14 with radio ads, and will cover TV and newspapers as well. In the June issue of the Reader's Digest, Amtrak will run an 8-page full-color advertising insert. In late April and early May a new series of TV spots will be aired in various areas.....

THE ADIRONDACK RAILWAY'S menu illustration shown here two issues ago was actually drawn from a photo of Dominion Atlantic train 95 running between Annapolis and Digby, Nova Scotia, points out reader Robert Eastwood.....

THE 100th ANNIVERSARY of the "Chattanooga Choo Choo" between Cincinnati and Chattanooga was celebrated on March 5 when a special train ran on that route, with up to 500 riders aboard. Service between the two cities began in 1880, and was discontinued in 1970. A newspaper reporter in Cincinnati coined the nickname for the train when it first ran. The special train, headed by Southern Railway engine 6147, carried famous railfan E. M. Frimbo and other dignitaries.....

★ ★ ★

AMTRAK'S ANNUAL REPORT for 1979 will differ from that of previous years. It will cover equipment, Amtrak's relationship with the railroads and the unions, location of existing and future routes, and a statement of intent. NARP has arranged for every member to be mailed a copy when it appears.....

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE will soon be measured at intermediate as well as end points, Amtrak hopes. It will seek legislation allowing it to measure on-time performance at all significant stations along a route and reward or penalize railroads accordingly. Another legislative change it will seek is the ability to expand service promptly on a given route without long waiting periods.....

AMTRAK'S CLARK TYLER and Carole Foryst spoke to the NARP joint Region VII and Illinois Rail meeting in Chicago on Feb 23. Said Tyler: "Almost every route we run on is going to have MANY more trains on it before the end of the century." Tyler explained his remark about "obscene sleeping car fares" made at the Denver NARP meeting in October: NARP Director James Clark reports it this way: Tyler had responded to a question about Amtrak fares by noting the Congressional mandate to achieve 50% of operating costs from fares by FY 1985, and then pointing out that this would obviously mean raising fares. He also noted that inequities exist in Amtrak's fare structure, and it's more important to work them out than to worry about first class and sleeping car fares. The latter could probably be raised to the point where they were "obscene" without drastically affecting the market, because primary concern must go to creation of an equitable fare structure for the coach passengers who make up the vast majority of Amtrak riders.....

★ ★ ★

A FARE INCREASE of 7% is expected on Amtrak effective Apr 27.....

THE AMTRAK BOARD authorized at its Feb 27 meeting the spending of $157,000 to build a wye track at New Haven for turning F40 and E9 locomotives. It will replace a turntable that was built in 1888 and is difficult to maintain.....

THE USA RAILPASS is being sold again, but only by travel agents in Europe, Japan and Australia.....

RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR still has real glass dome windows, report recent riders. The railway has begun accepting Visa and Master Charge credit cards, and possibly others, for tickets and in the train's diner and lounge. And the diner serves unchilled red wine in fifths--Almaden cabernet, pinot noir or burgundy. Last issue Ted Scull bemoaned the railroad practice of chilling red wine. The Rio Grande also has two types of white wine.....

ENGLISH CHANNEL TUNNEL, or Chunnel, is being proposed again, notes the Wall Street Journal (Mar 5). The British and French national railways have jointly proposed a single-track line that would cost $1.5 billion to build.....

ENTERTAINER PEARL BAILEY and her husband were noted traveling Pasadena to Chicago on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED in bedrooms G and H in car line no. 0430 that went thru Kansas City on Feb 24.....

THE ANN RUTLEDGE on Feb 1 was annulled Kansas City-St. Louis due to a MoPac freight derailment west of Jefferson City MO. Train 301 was also terminated at St. Louis and passengers bused on.....

ICG FREIGHT DERAILMENT at 2:05pm on Mar 2 at Tonti IL (where the CITY OF NEW ORLEANS derailed in June, 1971) caused the SHAWNEE, train 392, to terminate at Centralia and passengers to be bused to Champaign, where train 381's consist, the ILLINI, was turned to take passengers to Chicago. Train 59 of Mar 2 and 58 of Mar 3 were rerouted via the ICG's Edgewood Cutoff.....

A BOMB THREAT telephoned to the Union Pacific on Feb 13 caused the two PIONEERS to be halted for a time. The eastbound stopped at Hood River at 1:50pm and the westbound stopped at Hinkle. Twenty freight trains were also halted. No bomb was found.....

A BOMB THREAT also stopped the two LAKE SHORE LIMITED trains on Feb 27. The westbound was searched at LaCarne OH and the eastbound at Hudson NY.....

NEW BRUNSWICK NJ Amtrak station early on Mar 5 suffered a fire that destroyed the waiting room and injured a young man. The $100,000 fire started in a newsstand..... LAKE SHORE LIMITED seen in New York on Leap Year Day (Feb 29) still carried an Amcafe as lounge. A conductor said that all sets were so equipped.....

BN AND AMTRAK are both suing the estate of a deceased Spokane man for damaging their property when he ran into the side of an Amtrak train last July 17 at Argonne Road near Spokane WA.....

A NEW ROUTE from St. Louis to Oklahoma City on the Frisco railway was being studied by Amtrak in February. It runs thru Sullivan, Rolla, Lebanon and Springfield MO and Tulsa OK.....

THE IOWA STATE Dept. of Transportation looked into the costs of rail passenger service between Council Bluffs and Clinton back in the first energy crisis, and now officials are talking again of the feasibility of such a run, using C&NW tracks. A 403-B operation here would require construction of a passenger station in Council Bluffs, which has none.....

SAN JOAQUIN RIDERSHIP in February, first month of 2-train operation, was 11,180 according to preliminary conductor counts--up 105% from Feb 1979, which had only 28 days. Average ridership per train per day was 96.3 passengers. 55% of passengers were on trains 710 & 711, while 45% were on the new trains 708 & 709. These figures are considered quite spectacular for a new rail operation.....

THE IOWA DOT on Feb 19 voted to ask Amtrak to route the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR over the Rock Island tracks between Omaha and Chicago, in order to serve Des Moines, Iowa City and the Quad Cities. The on-line population there is figured at about 807,000 compared to 207,000 on the present BN routing. Observers say that the Rock Island trackage is not in bad shape at the present, with just a little work needed. The move would cost the state less than initiating new 403-B operations.....

CARS & CONSISTS

*RENO FUN TRAIN eastbound Oakland Feb 8: engines 254, 293 (F40s), 513 (SDP), steam car 661; cars coaches 5601, 5428, 5402, 5424, lounge 3311, coaches 5415, 5417, 5604, 5408, 5433, 5414, 5641, 5429, dome observation 9310.

*ANN RUTLEDGE, train 304, Kansas City Feb 17: engine 310 (F40); cars 21209, diner 8500, 21815.

*MoPac passenger extra (inspection train) Van Buren-Little Rock AR Feb 20: engine MP 2160 (GP-40); cars MP 11 sleeper lounge, MP 1, MP 2, MP 8 business cars.

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 40, Harrisburg-NY Feb 27: engine 4896 (GG-1); cars 1110, 5503, 5802, 3336, 8801-8800 diner, 2705 "Winter Haven", 2022 "Silver Rest".

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Kansas City Mar 2: engines 527, 516, 508; cars 1223, 1075, 9990, 9905, 9956, 9974, 9901, 8097, 2217 "Indian Pony", 2751 "Palm Dome", 2561 "Lincoln Park", deadheads La Junta-Chicago: 10605, 21044, 21087, 21063.

*CRESCENT, train 19, Tuscaloosa Feb 23: engines 258 (F40), 420, 425 (E's); cars 1113, 1427, 5293, 5285, 5284, 5476, 5299, 3410, 8382, "Shenandoah River", "Rapidan River", 2802 "Halifax County". Train 20, same: engines 257 (F40), 421, 433 (E's); cars 1187, 1419, 5409, 5463, 5292, 5441, 5413, 5457, 3326 "Betsy Ross Club", 8384, 2866 "St. Johns River", 2861 "Warrior River", 2831 "Lebanon Valley".

*"Hattie B.", train 911, Phoenix Feb 28: engine 289 (F40); cars 21257, 21266, 21268, 21255, 21264, 21254, engine 232 (F40) for head-end power.

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Rate The Trains

RTN is resuming its train rating surveys. You can submit your ratings now on regularly-scheduled North American passenger trains (not commuter) that you have personally ridden since Oct 28, 1979.

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) listed below: (A) Your overall impression of the train, taking everything into account; (B) Service from operating crew (conductor, etc.); (C) Dining or snack crew service; (D) Lounge crew service; (E) Food quality; (F) Car mechanical condition; (G) Car cleanliness and housekeeping; (H) Condition of track & roadbed; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Condition of stations: (K) Appropriateness of type of equipment used.

Use the 9-point rating scale below. Do not use previous rating forms, as we have changed some of the categories. Put ratings on separate sheet from other correspondence.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9

1 ▲ Extremely poor

5 ▲ Average, acceptable

9 ▲ Extremely good

RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

NAME & ADDRESS:
.....
.....
.....

Can we use your name? _____

TRAIN NAME & NUMBER	DATE RIDDEN	A Overall	B Operating Crew	C Dining Crew	D Lounge Crew	E Food Quality	F Car Condition (mechanical)	G Car Cleanliness	H Track Condition	I Scheduling	J Station Condition	K Type of Cars (appropriate?)	COMMENT SYMBOL*
													1
													2
													3
													4
													5
													6
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	

*COMMENTS: To add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"As rising fuel prices and continuing shortages change the transportation makeup in this country, we must be prepared to offer the public attractive alternatives to the automobile. Amtrak is convinced that these developing corridors can provide such alternatives, where trip times and frequencies are competitive with the automobile. To a great degree, Amtrak's future lies in these corridors."

--Amtrak President Alan Boyd in introduction to report on 13 emerging rail corridors, Feb 25.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"During the (Liverpool and Manchester Railway) line's construction and after its completion, prints and lithographs of the time depicted every aspect--the railroad, the landscape, the structures en route, the couches for passengers and the cars for freight--and these historic representations were the inspiration for the stamp designs."

--Samuel A. Tower in New York Times, March 2.

(Even the plastic-covered mattresses.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

Apr 17: Boston MA, Mass Bay RRE annual banquet, open to all. Speaker: David P. Morgan, Editor, TRAINS. $9.50 in advance only. Masachussetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts Box 61, Needham MA 02194.

Apr 13: S.F. Muni streetcar excursion using pantograph-equipped PCC 1008 covering all surface lines. Only such streetcar in North America. Bay Area Elec. RR Ass'n, c/o Neil Lang, 811 York #201, Oakland CA 94610. (415) 444-4714.

Mar 22 & 29: "Skyline Ltd" steam excursion Alexandria-Front Royal VA; $24. "Warrenton Ltd" Alexandria-Warrenton VA Mar 23 & 30, $18. NRHS & RRE-sponsored on SR. Steam Excursion, PO Box 456, Laurel MD 20810.

Apr 13: 6th Annual Railroad Extravaganza 9am-3:30pm, $2. Railroad collectibles & models. Sponsor: Tri-State Rwy Historical Society Inc. Mother Seton High School, Central Ave & Westfield Ave, Clark NJ. Info: Box 255, Dover NJ 07801.

May 10: "Mississippi River Ltd" East Peoria-Keokuk RT; May 11: "Corn Country Special" East Peoria-Watseka RT. Nickel Plate Berkshire 765 steam engine, first class or coach. Runs on TP&W. 1st class $60, adult coach $27.95 either day. Golden Arrow Box 6843, Chicago IL 60680. Sponsor: NRHS & Rail Tours of America.

Apr 18-20: San Diego-Las Vegas RT in ex-ATSF cafe-obs 1509. Meals aboard included. Bus tour to Hoover Dam. $120 w. hotel space avail. but not included. Write: Pacific S.W. Rwy Museum, 1509 to Las Vegas trip, Box 12096, San Diego CA 92112.

Mar 22: Amer. Ass'n of Private RR Car Owners Inc. western regional meeting, Reno NV, Golden Nugget Hotel Centennial Room 2pm. Trip from Oakland avail. in "Timberline Tavern" on rear of SFZ 3/21. Great Western Tours, 639 Market, Suite 900, San Fran.

Mar 21-23: LAKE SHORE LTD trip to & from NARP Region VI annual mtg in Toledo, Hillcrest Hotel 11am Mar 22, featuring Jack Martin. Info: Kevin J. Gregoire, 131 Elizabeth St, Pittsfield MA 01201. Send SASE or call 413-442-9345.

May 17: Rail excursion to Cape Cod. 8:30am lv South Braintree-Middleboro, Buzzards Bay-Falmouth-Buzzards Bay-Hyannis-Middleboro-Attleboro-Boston South Station 8:30pm. $32. Boston NRHS-Mass Bay RRE Joint Trip Committee, Box 136, Ward Hill MA 01830.

Mar 29: Riverboat cruises begin S.F.-Sacramento and v.v. Run each Sat & Sun thru Jun & Sep-Oct. 91-mi 1-way cruise $27. Also Sacto-S.F. or RT. Delta Travel Agency, PO Box 813, West Sacramento CA 95691; phone 916-372-3690.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. To be sure of entry in time, have it in to us at least 4 weeks before event. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

TRAINS!!! We know them!!! We ride them!!! We sell train tickets!!! Call us for tickets and reservations for your next trip!!! GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994. P.S. We sell air tickets, too.

JOIN THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TIMETABLE COLLECTORS. $12 annual membership brings two regular publications and many benefits for the collector. Sample publication free. Tom Coval, Membership Director, 21 E. Robin Rd, Holland PA 18966.

TOM'S FAMOUS TIMETABLE GRAB BAGS only $12. Original clear plastic slip covers for public timetables only $7.25 per 100. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland PA 18966.

OVER 300 BOOKS included in the new RMS catalog--plus jewelry, hardware and more! Send 28¢ in stamps for catalog. Replica Mail Specialties, P.O. Box A-1353, Grand Central Station, New York NY 10017. Please note our new P.O. Box number.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports from 30 railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. Will buy items.

RAILROAD CLOTH EMBLEMS. Send $1.00 for two samples and list. Joseph F. Lajoie, 22 Stevens Street, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

TRAIN THROUGH MEXICO lets you see Mexico's "back-country" the economical, relaxing, exciting way--by train and save 35%. Write R.T. Peck, Drawer 72, Whittier CA 90608

TROLLEY FANS: Read "Trolley Trails Through the West". Volumes 1-Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane/Bellingham, 5-Montana/Utah, 6-Western Canada $3.00 ea. NEW: Volume 7 - Northern California $4.00. Moneyback guarantee. Wilson Brothers Publications, Box 712 rtn, Yakima WA 98907.

Large Negative cameras for sale. Several in 120 and one 616 Kodak Special. SASE for list, descriptions. R. van Wormer, 472 Wolcott, Kent OH 44240.

TIMETABLES: NEW VIA Rail system folder Feb 3-Apr 26 1980; also never-issued fall 1979 VIA folder. $1 for handling and postage to: TRANSPORT 2000, Box 300, Term. A, Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1N 8V3.

WANTED Trains Mag. Jan '41 Vol 1 #3. J Petros 6736 Cleon #31 N.Hollywood CA 91606.

AMTRAK TRAVELERS - Reserve NOW for summer travel. Avoid disappointments of early sellouts due to gas prices and fare increases. Reserve with the Rail specialists --where rail is our only business. Let's Travel Tours, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. (714) 787-8350.

Western Railroadiana Collectors' Faire, sponsored by National Association of Timetable Collectors. Saturday, May 3, 1980, Holiday Inn North, 1900 Canterbury Rd., at Freeway 160, Sacramento, CA. Hours 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Tables available: Members $10.00. Non-Members $20.00. Admission $1.00. Contact Roy Gabriel, Box 981, Sacramento, CA 95805.

THE MISSISSIPPI ZEPHYR is coming soon! The Twentieth Century Railroad Club's tribute to America's disappearing domes will operate one time only, Sunday, May 18. Don't miss what may be the last chance to experience Vista-Dome viewing from a midwest domeliner. Operates Chicago-Dubuque, Iowa (with a stop in historic Galena) over ICG trackage. Special train leaves Chicago 10 a.m. and returns about 9 p.m. Consist to include Vista-Dome Coaches, E-Units, and a lounge car (all subject to availability). Photo Stops. RailFair 80 also includes the Ninth Annual Chicago Railfan Luncheon and an evening of railroad video entertainment by After Image, Ltd., Saturday May 17. Details on all this and more from Unirail, Department N, P.O. Box A-3258, Chicago, IL 60690. Enclose SASE.

DON'T DIAL AMTRAK! Dial (415) 326-7330 for your reservations and avoid busy signals and "holds"! Low fares for families, handicapped travelers, senior citizens. We sell Britrail and Eurail passes. Call "The Railfans" at Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis St., Menlo Park, California 94025. (415) 326-7330.

Railroadiana Auction Sat. May 3 sponsored by Pottstown NRHS at Old St. Lukes Church, behind the Post Office Gilbertsville PA. 400 lots of collectibles Lanterns Builder Plates, Timetables, and much more. For info write Ted Maurer 1930 N. Charlotte St. Pottstown PA 19464. Inspection at 9am, sale at 11am.

FELLOW RAIL TRAVEL PROMOTERS & others concerned: Send me a SSAE and I will gratefully send you my thesis entitled: "Why multi-state 403-B Amtrak services won't work in train restorations". Merlin L Marlowe, RR 2, Fairfax, MN 55332.

Need help in fighting Amtrak stupidity in Buffalo NY. Amtrak has left Central Terminal in favor of a temporary trailer in Depew NY (just as far out as the airport without public transportation). I need information on the N.Y.S. law preventing Amtrak from leaving Central Station until at least the Depew station is finished. The Depew situation is very dangerous! The law was passed sometime after a similar trailer situation in Rochester NY. Also any information on any other laws preventing Amtrak from moving into a trailer station. Please send to:
John Szczepaniec, 21 Sunset Street, Buffalo NY 14207.

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